Radio Days

WTCC, WCCS and now WFCS at 107.7-- and anywhere at wfcsradio.com

Vol. 5, Summer 2018

Blues fans and a broadcast record

It's a sweltering July here in the Washington, D.C. suburbs as I'm writing this. So let's turn the calendar back to a cooler day, May 6--the WFCS Moody Blues party. The event began with some food and drink at the New Britain Elks Lodge and then moved on to the station. Many thanks to Dick Wiszniak '73, who graciously made the Elks venue possible.

Host Steve Strinie '86, once again formatted his show with deep MB album cuts and invited other WFCS alumni, staff and friends to join in.

The party was extra special this year because it marked "Bungalow" Bill Walsh's 40 years at WFCS, a well-earned record! Alumni from far and near had an opportunity to congratulate Bill as he shared the airwaves. The event also marked the last show on WFCS for the season. This year, the station closed for the summer and underwent renovations.

A final note worth mentioning: It's gratifying to welcome the station staff who joined us. Since 1986, the regularly changing staff has made our homecoming alumni shows possible and we greatly appreciate that and understand it's their station. Still, it's rewarding to get to know the current staff, stay up-to-date on station issues and look forward to eventually welcome them back as alumni.

Paul Koscak '73, editor

Here are a few May 6 highlights.





Steve Strinie '86 (left) shares trivia and radio memories over the air with Bill Walsh who made WFCS broadcast history--40 years on the air. Outside the studio, from left, Megan Colleran, '21, WFCS program director; Randy Shamber, '84, Melissa Evans '85 and Brazos Ebner, '19, WFCS director of development.









Photos: top left: Randy Shamber, '84; Melissa Evans, '85; Bill Walsh; Keith Hall, '78; Albert Lenge, former WCNI broadcaster; and Steve Strinie working the board. Keith Hall is recalling his many past and present personal connections with the Moody Blues. Keith is also an accomplished keyboard and guitar player.

Chris Solla,'20, WFCS's new general manager, speaks about his vision for the station.

From bottom left: Long-time WFCS volunteer broadcaster Peter Varhol mixes it up with host Steve Strinie. Alumnus broadcaster Tony Augeri '73, talks about his former radio show.

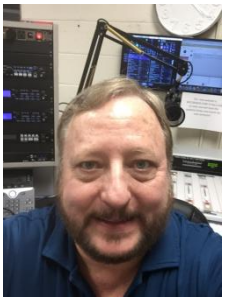


Photo by General Manager Chris Solla. An artistic view inside the renovated studio. Two turntables, mixer and board.

Bill's article ran in our last edition of Radio Days. But 40 years of broadcasting deserves another visit. It's a great piece.

Looking Back Four Decades

By "Bungalow" Bill Walsh



We often do not think of the importance that radio has had in our lives. It has become the soundtrack of our existence with certain songs bringing us back to memories of long ago. In today's media-saturated world of internet, cellphones and other communications, radio has been pushed to the background. But with streaming and satellite radio, it has moved forward once again.

I began my journey on WFCS (then at 90.1 FM) on Friday, May 5, 1978, broadcasting from 8 p.m. to midnight. My motivation then, and still today, was to play all the great music that commercial radio was ignoring. Their formatting and emphasis on profits had made commercial radio basically unlistenable. When WFCS started broadcasting in stereo and on April 13, 1982, we moved to a new frequency, 97.9 FM.

Many people have intercepted my orbit at the radio station over 40 years. Among them are Randy Borovsky ("The Cosmic Muffin"), Evan Kramer ("Evan in the Evening"), Chris Moller ("Mr. Charlie"), Randy Shamber ("Uncle John"), Ron Byczkiewicz ("Ron Doyle") and my current cohorts, Steve Strinie and Melissa Evans.

"Their formatting and emphasis on profits had made commercial radio basically unlistenable."

One of my favorite radio memories is when my younger brother, Jimmy, who was in high school in my early years on the radio, used to have keg parties at Paper Goods Pond in Berlin on Friday nights. Armed with only a portable radio, he would walk across the street to a pay phone (remember them?) to call me and to request a song by the Doors (his favorite band). Because he was my brother, I would play his song within about 5 minutes along with a 15- to 20-minute Doors set. Jimmy passed away last year at the age of 55.

I have truly enjoyed creating a radio show with all of my own music selections plus listener requests. This was the way FM radio started out in the late '60s, with a free-form music format programmed by the disc jockey, not some corporation. This concept survives today only on college radio. Hopefully, I can continue to broadcast on "The Edge" WFCS 107.7 FM, "Where the Music *still* Matters!"

Bill Walsh attended the University of Missouri and put two daughters through Central. In 1995, he worked at Middletown's WMRD-AM doing sales and commercial production. He's currently a sales representative for the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. Bill's popular show, Sunday Spectrum, is a WFCS institution featuring progressive and obscure rock from the '60s to today. ***Throughout this summer, listen to Bill Walsh on WRTC 89.3 FM, Saturdays, 7 - 10 p.m. Bill alternates that time each week with alumna Melissa Evans.***